



First News First

Opening Doors with Christ, One Another and Our Neighbors

From the Pastor's Desk....

As we enter summer our worship series will be "Heroes of the Faith," looking at biblical characters who are models of courage, strength, and resilience for us today. People who heard and acted on God's voice, inspiring us to do the same today. In worship we will also be sharing our personal heroes of the faith who encouraged our faith for a reason, season or our lifetimes. In May we announced that I will be leaving First Church this summer, hitting pause on pastoral ministry. Over the past two years I have been inspired by how you have shared moments when you trusted God with your future in sometimes unexpected or uncertain seasons. Those tiny conversations, pivotal moments, and prayers that brought you to trust in God more fully and deeply than ever before. You have been my faith heroes as I start this new chapter.

Starting July 1 st , Rev. Dr. Lew Parks will be leading First Church as interim pastor for one year. He comes with deep background in leadership in local churches and continues to teach part time at Wesley Theological Seminary. He will serve with us $\frac{3}{4}$ time as he continues to teach a few courses remotely during this season. Pastor Lew is married to Peggy and has several adult children and grandchildren. He lives in Lebanon and will stay at our parsonage several nights a week during this year. (See an introduction from Pastor Lew on page 2)

I pray you will welcome Pastor Lew and his family with open arms and include them daily in your prayers.

Thank you for your prayers, worship and ministry together these past two years. I have been changed and shaped by you! I pray that you would work with them to continue to be heroes of faith who live out your faith in this church and into the community – may you love Christ boldly, serve the community joyfully and lead courageously to share your faith and trust in Jesus with others.

Be God's Always,
Pastor Mira Hewlett

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Pastoral Transition Timeline

June 7th – One Worship at 9am, Sticky Bun Sunday and say goodbye to Pastor Mira & Grace after worship

June 21st – Pastor Mira's last Sunday

(she will cover pastoral care through June 30)

June 28th – Lisa Aronson preaching

July 1st – Pastor Lew begins at First UMC

July 5th – Pastor Lew's first Sunday

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PASTOR REV. LEW PARKS



Dear Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church,

On July 1st I will join you as interim Senior Pastor. I count it as an honor and singular pleasure to be sent to this congregation by the cabinet. "I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance" (Rev 2:2). I also count as esteemed colleagues your gifted pastors (senior and associates) at least as far back as the late Rev. Don Shover.

What does "interim" mean? In this situation it means we both know that I am with you until, and only until June 30, 2027. Then you will receive your next Senior Pastor with an expected longer tenure. The fun way of saying that is if there is anything either of us doesn't like about the other, we just "wait them out!" And be assured, I do follow John Wesley's first General Rule: "Do no harm."

But I also follow John Wesley's second General Rule: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can...". And the good I hope to accomplish as interim July 2026 – June 2027 includes these works: **(1)** Maintain the vitality of your worship, ministries, and missions... **(2)** Address long-term needs (budget, buildings, personnel) and have plans in place before your next pastor arrives... **(3)** Experiment! It's not a word we use much in church these days. But "interim" status of the pastor gives us a unique freedom to treat our life together as a testing ground. This can be a year when we tweak, run pilot projects, play out alternative scenarios, stop this/start that. No harm, no foul!

I will be joined in this journey by my lifelong helpmate, Peggy. She will join me in worship and other events. We are both looking forward to our time among you.

See you soon!
Pastor Lew Parks

Rev. Dr. Lewis A. Parks
Cell/Text: 717-695-1532
Pastor@fumchurch.com

Education

BS Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, PA (1968)
MDiv Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC (1973)
PhD Ecumenical Institute of Theology, Baltimore, MD (1984)

Ordination

Deacon Central Pennsylvania Conference, The United Methodist Church (1970)
Elder Central Pennsylvania Conference, The United Methodist Church (1974)

Service Record as Pastor

Clearfield Circuit (1965-1968); Long Green, MD (1968-1970); Savage, MD (1970-1974); New Freedom, PA (1974-1978); Montgomery, First (1978-1980); Williamsport, Wesley (1980-1986); Altoona, Gethsemane (1986-1991); Middletown, Wesley (1991-1995); District Superintendent, Chambersburg (1995-1998); Millerstown Charge (Jan 1 – June 30, 2005); Dillsburg, Arnolds (2008-2010); Lemoyne, Calvary (Jan 1, 2013-Aug 31, 2019); Chambers Hill, Harrisburg (Jan 1 -June 30, 2020); Millersburg, First (Jan 07, 2021 – June 30, 2021); Mt. Olivet, Mechanicsburg (July 2021- June 30, 2023); First, Hershey, assistant pastor (2023-2026).

Service Record in Extension Ministry at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington DC

Associate Dean of Church Leadership Development (1998-2008); Professor of Church Leadership Development & Director of DMin Program (1998-2018); Professor Emeritus (2019-); Continue to teach online courses in UM Polity and Church Leadership and Development.

Published Books (Abingdon Press)

Ducking Spears, Dancing Madly: A Biblical Model of Church Leadership (2004)
Preaching in the Small Membership Church (2009)
Small on Purpose: Life in a Significant Church (2017)

Family Information

Married to Peggy Hile of Clearfield, PA for 59 years. We have two children: Scott is married to Nan Palmatier; they live in Sinking Spring, PA and have three children. Jennifer is married to Scott Snyder; they live in Richland, PA and have three children.



Summer Sunday School **Sunday Mornings | 9:45-10:45 A.M. | Multipurpose Room**

During the summer, many of our regular classes and groups take a break. Instead, we offer several opportunities to gather and learn and serve together.

•**June 7 – Sticky Bun Sunday and Pastor Farewell**

This gathering time will take place in the Gym/Multipurpose Room AFTER the One Church Service at 9:00 A.M.

•**June 28 – Service Project: New Digs**

Join us in learning about New Digs and making “New Home” care packages.

•**July 12 – Presentation: Katie Dang**

Hear from Katie Dang as she shares her knowledge on Estate Planning. Katie shared very helpful information (regardless of life stage) last year, and has more to share. This year she is presenting: “Estate Planning Pitfalls: What People Still Miss After They Think They’ve Done Everything Right.”

•**July 26 – Service Project: VBS and Caitlin Smiles**

Learn about the mission projects from our VBS week and make additional kits/bags for Caitlin Smiles hospital ministry

•**August 16 – Service Project: Back to School**

Mechanicsburg churches pray and care for our nearby schools. Come help prepare items to donate to the schools and to learn how you can be praying for the school communities

•**August 30 – Presentation: Bells Scotland Presentation**

The Bells are back from Scotland and want to share their trip with you. Come learn about the music ministry of bells and how they connected with other choirs from around the world.

Guyer Class, Room 123

This class, comprised of a wonderful group of seniors who are young at heart, is taught by a variety of church leaders and continues to meet during the summer months. Anyone looking for a class to attend is welcome here! This class will often join the combined offerings, but will notify the class when doing so. Class leaders: Steve and Deb Noss, sdppp@msn.com.

----**Summer Study: Cokesbury’s Adult Bible Study**

This quarter’s theme: Spirit, Boldness, Opportunity

Summer is a great time for your church to reflect on what God is doing. This study will read the Book of Acts, exploring how God worked in the early church, and how God can work in today’s church.

Discipleship Opportunities:

No matter whether you are just beginning to explore faith, growing as a disciple, or becoming a fully devoted follower, there is always something new to learn on our journey with Jesus. First Church is here to help by providing a variety of offerings for your next faithful step:

• **Wednesday Men’s Group – 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, at 8:00 p.m.**

This group enjoys great fellowship while focusing on discussion-based Bible studies. Contact John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. if interested in more information.

• **United Women in Faith Circle Groups:**

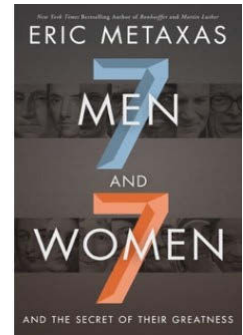
United Women in Faith Circle groups are small, local communities within the United Women in Faith organization, a mission-focused group for women within the United Methodist Church. These circles are where women gather for spiritual formation, mutual support, fellowship, mission education, and to take action on issues of justice at local and global levels.

Martha Circle – Leader: Marley Ann Schmick

This circle meets in the church Fellowship Hall on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM, and members rotate in helping to lead lessons.

•Sermon Series Book: 7 Men and 7 Women – Monday, June 22nd | 6:00 - 7:30 P.M

Kick off summer reading about some heroes of faith using the book, 7 Men and 7 Women by Eric Metaxas. This book looks at people whose faith impacted their lives, changed the course of history, and shaped our world today. Purchase the book yourself and start reading now; then join Pastor Mira on Monday, June 22nd, 6-7:30 pm for a book chat night. The chat will focus on the following sections of the book: Introduction, William Wilberforce, Pope John Paul II, Susanna Wesley, and Corrie ten Boom. Sign up here or in the Main Lobby. If you need help getting a book, please let us know. Reach out to Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com with questions. Sign up on Church Center or the Registration Table. Location will be announced closer to the date.



•Summer Studies

Consider gathering a group of friends and digging into God's word through a Bible or Book study this summer. Gather on a back porch, make plans to meet at a café – whatever it might be, summer offers the space to connect and grow. Reach out to Lisa Aronson if you need help with resources, studies, or other group ideas.

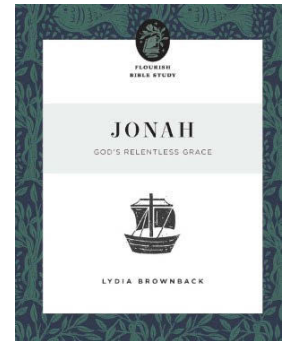


•Picnic in the Park: Various Wednesdays | 5:30-7:00 P.M.

Join us for a time of connecting in a space suitable for our younger friends. Bring a picnic lunch for you (and your family). Kids can play on the playground, and student/parents/adults have time for small group connection and a short devotional. Sign up on Church Center to be notified of weather changes/location details.

•Women's Summer Bible Study - Thursdays | 6:30 -7:30 P.M

This summer, join us for a 10-week women's Bible study as we walk through Jonah: God's Relentless Grace by Lydia Brownback. This study encourages women to dig deep into Scripture through the summer months with thoughtful reading and reflection each week. This is a space for conversation, encouragement, and accountability as we grow together in God's Word. Come for one week or join us whenever you are home — no pressure, just connection and study. While childcare isn't provided, children who are comfortable playing independently are welcome to enjoy the nearby playground during our time together. Bring your Bible, your workbook, and a heart ready to grow — we'd love to see you there! Sign up on Church Center or at the Registration Table to get a workbook and to be included in future communications regarding the study. For questions, contact Lisa Aronson discipleship@fumchurch.com



2026 First Church Concert Series

The Worship Arts Ministry is pleased to announce the remaining schedule for the 2026 First Church Concert Series! All concert and events open to the public to celebrate the joy of music, as we feature various performers and musicians. All concerts are free, though donations are accepted. This year's concerts include:

- **An Acoustic Evening of Worship** – Christy Holliday & Jesse King | Sunday, Sept. 20, time TBD
- **"Holiday Harmony"** – First Church Music Ensembles | Sunday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m.

From the Library



I am ready for summer and all it entails—Vacation Bible School, the August yard sale interspersed with lots of reading and doing jigsaw puzzles with my grandkids. I hope you are looking forward to summer as well and have lots of reading on your check list, too. Let me tell you about two books you won't want to miss.

Where We Belong: an Orphan Train Novel is written by a favorite author of historical fiction, Kim Vogel Sawyer. Ms. Sawyer writes about something so foreign to me, I had to research it to believe it could be true. During the Great Depression parents who could not provide for their children would place them in an orphanage for small periods of time or permanently. Sometimes the orphanage would be overcrowded or even shut down and the children were sent on a train west without informing the parents. The children were then adopted either as family members or as unpaid servants. This is the basis of Ms. Sawyer's book. Callum Holbrook has placed his three children temporarily in an orphanage after losing his wife. When he goes back to reclaim his children, he finds they have been sent west. He sets out to find them. Meanwhile, Widow Hester Haak who lives in Kansas has taken the three children into her home and is determined to make them into a family. No one's road is easy from the children in a strange environment, to Hester with three "new" children, to Callum who is desperate to find his children again. There is a message of hope when a person relies on God throughout this book. I think you will really enjoy the journey.

Natalie Walter's newest book is Spies, Lies, and Alibis: a low-spice, thrilling spy romance and that is how it is titled. At first, I wasn't sure what the title meant, but after reading reviews it seems to mean it is a lighthearted romantic spy novel. Cybil Langford is an executive assistant to an estate mogul, but she is really gathering intel on her boss's criminal enterprise. Then to her surprise Ben Bradley, who is also living a double life as an FBI agent/financial advisor, gets involved with her boss. Cybil and Ben had been in a relationship but after their bad breakup, they parted and now neither of them knows the other one is not who they are pretending to be. Cybil is forced to work with a man that broke her heart and Ben is forced to work with a woman he never got over. Find out how they can navigate this precarious journey. You won't want to put this book down.

The library is preparing for its annual book sale in August. We are asking for donations of gently used children and adult books of all kinds, puzzles, CDs, and DVDs. Unfortunately, we cannot accept textbooks, encyclopedias, or VCR tapes. You can donate any time by bringing things into the library on Sunday morning or leaving them in the blue bin outside the library at any time. For large donations, please call Pam Van Kirk or Donna Nichols. This library sale funds the library all year long and enables us to bring the best of Christian books to you! Thank you for your support!

See you in the Library,
-Annette, Debra, Kathy, Marge, Mary, Pam, & Donna

Praying Follower



Prayer Room | Tower Room located off the back of room 216

We learn in scripture that Jesus often withdrew and found a quiet place to pray: "Early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went out to a solitary place to pray (Mark 1:35)." A place where his focus could be on his Father. The prayer room will be available as a quiet place you can sit with God on Sunday mornings during the Sunday enrichment hour (9:45 AM-10:45 AM).

Joy in the Morning | A small group invitation, Monday, June 15th , 1pm

If you live with chronic pain or ongoing health challenges, we invite you to join in sharing discussion and supportive friendship with this small group. We meet monthly at 1 pm on a Monday afternoon at Bethany Village's West Apartments Commons Room. Janice Bowen facilitates, drawing upon readings and devotionals. For more info contact Janice wecare@fumchurch.com.



Visiting with Friends!

If you miss seeing a special friend at church, Janice Bowen would like to hear from you! Janice enjoys taking people with her for visits so that friends can remain connected by visiting in-person with one another! Whether you find yourself 'stuck at home', no longer able to get out to Church, missing your friends who are at home..Janice would love to hear from you! [717-766-4611](tel:717-766-4611) x112 or wecare@fumchurch.com.

Greeting Cards to Share!

Looking for a birthday card or a way to send 'get well' wishes to a friend? Stop by the 'Card Ministry' display in the lobby and help yourself to a card! If you'd like a bigger supply or know of someone who may appreciate receiving a card, please contact Janice Bowen wecare@fumchurch.com.

Passionate Worshipper



VBS 2026

Vacation Bible School is gearing up!

Registration is now open for kids, as well as teen and adult volunteers to join us July 13-17th from 9am-noon. Kids will Join Activities Director Miss Katie and Ollie the Arctic Seal on an epic adventure filled with games, music, crafts, snacks and amazing Bible stories. Sign up today at Church Center or at fumchurch.com/vbs and receive a free gift if you register before June 1st.



Isaiah 61 Homeless Ministry and Easier Way to Support! June 17, July 15

First Church is pleased to support Isaiah 61 Ministries, a local organization that serves the needs of the homeless in Dauphin County. They provide a variety of services including a soup kitchen, clothing bank and Life groups. Specifically, First Church members prepare and serve meals to the homeless in downtown Harrisburg on the third Wednesday of each month. The next volunteer opportunities are Wednesday, June 17 and Wednesday, July 15 at 6:30 p.m. To find out how to get involved, contact Tiffany Holland at tholland1967@gmail.com. We now have a simpler way to sign up for items. See the Time to Sign Up link on Church Center.

Save the Date! One Church Sunday - Sunday, June 7th | 9 a.m.

Join us on Sunday, June 7th for a special One Church Sunday as we gather together for one combined worship service at 9:00 AM. On this day, we will not hold our usual 8:30 or 11:00 services. This is a meaningful opportunity to celebrate who we are as one church family. While we may worship in different styles week to week, we are united in Christ, in community, and in our shared mission. One Church Sunday gives us a chance to experience that unity in a tangible way—lifting our voices together, seeing familiar and new faces, and celebrating the unique ways God is at work among us. Following the service, we invite you to stay for an extended time of fellowship and coffee as we enjoy Sticky Bun Sunday together—a sweet way to connect and celebrate the beginning of summer as one First Church family. See more info about this in "Generous Giver". Hope to see you there!

June Sermon Series Bible Reading

Enhance your experience with the sermon series "Heroes of the Faith" by following along with the daily Bible reading plan. Plans are online or picked up from the tables outside the sanctuary doors.

Registration for our 2026 camp and retreat events is open!

Families can check out the programs offered at Wesley Forest and Camp Penn by visiting the website at suscrm.org or check out the registration table in main lobby for more info! You can forward your camp registrations and/or questions to Deb Noss sdppp@msn.com or to mattandamyortiz@gmail.com.

Dedicated Missionary



Gleaning 2026 | Meets at 6 pm in the Oak Grove Parking Lot (846 Fisher Rd., Mechanicsburg) 3rd Thursdays: June – October : 6/18, 7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15

This growing season, we are excited to once more have the opportunity to glean locally in partnership with Oak Grove Farms! We will share the fresh produce with our local community at One80 Ministries, Keller Senior Living, and the 3 in-town Little Free Pantries. If you haven't gleaned with us before, please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com to have your name/contact information added to the FUMC 2026 'Glean Team' list to receive additional information! New this year..come at 5 pm for picnic table fellowship, a chance to purchase ice cream before Oak Grove closes, and to share in a devotional from the book "Playing in the Dirt".



"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God" ~Leviticus 19:9-10.

Youth Week of Service | June 29 – July 2

The youth are hosting 4 days of service at the end of June and would love for you to join them. In partnering with Wildheart Ministry, the students will be serving the people of Harrisburg. Wildheart Ministries is an instrumental organization advancing revitalization efforts within the Allison Hill neighborhood. Sign up on Church Center to join us for a day of serving. Up-to-date clearances are required for those over 18 serving with our students.

Rainy Day Service Projects

Kid-friendly, anytime, anywhere at-home service bags are available in the Youth Ministry window well of the small lobby (along the wall with the water fountain). These bags provide simple at-home service projects. Develop a heart for service by engaging not just in events of service, but the simple projects that anyone can do. Return completed items to the basket on the window well, to Lisa Aronson, or to the main office.

Relationship Builder



Pickleball in the Park! Tuesday 5-7 pm (early bird start option @ 4:30 pm)

Join us on the Pickleball courts at Soldiers and Sailors Mechanicsburg Park! If the weather is unfavorable (excessive heat, rain, wind), we will play in the church multi-purpose room. No experience is necessary. Paddles/balls are available to borrow if you'd like to learn how to play! Contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com with questions or to be added to the email list for updates and weekly alerts.

FUMC Volleyball | Wednesdays 6 - 8 pm

If you enjoy volleyball, please come on out to the church gym Wednesday evenings! Please contact Janice Bowen at wecare@fumchurch.com with questions or to be added to the list to receive volleyball communications.



Men's Breakfast | June 6th and July 4th at 7:30 a.m., Brothers Restaurant

An open invitation is extended to all men who want to gather for good food and light-hearted fellowship on the first Saturday of each month (Brothers Restaurant is located at 705 Gettysburg Pike, Mechanicsburg, 17055). Please contact John Bowen or Bob Wertz, Jr. if you are interested in attending.

Senior Solo's Fellowship | June 9th

The Single/Solo fellowship will dine at Snappers Restaurant on Tuesday, June 9th at 11:30 a.m. If you plan on attending, please call Bonnie Guyer at (717)766-0145. Transportation can be provided upon request.



Financial Update

2026 Budgeted Income	\$811,683
2026 Budgeted Expenses	\$846,822 (\$35,139 deficit / greater expenses than income)
Expected Income YTD	\$267,855 (33% of budget)
Actual Income YTD	\$308,546 (38% of budget)
Actual Expenses	\$280,554 (33% of budgeted expenses)

General Fund expenses are in-line with expectations after four months of the 2026 budget. Income in April was typical for monthly giving seen in April, however the Church had additional dollars received in March that pushed our actual income above our expectations. We know that our congregation gives differently depending on what makes the most sense for their financial situations so we see gifts that represent most or all of an annual pledge, while other gifts are given weekly or monthly. Comparing gifts received to what we expect for the year we are on track for overall giving. We appreciate all gifts that the church receives and will continue to be conservative stewards of these funds in furtherance of our mission to serve the Lord and each other.

The bell tower loan balance as of April 30 is \$25,481.83 and the parsonage loan balance is \$38,387. We refinanced the parsonage loan through the Conference in 2025 and were fortunate to receive a 0% interest rate on the remaining balance. The first principal payment under the new loan terms will occur at the end of May.

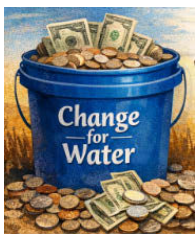
Please reach out to Brian Sanker, chair of the First Church Finance Committee, at sankerb@gmail.com or to Amy Erno, Director of Finance, at financedirector@fumchurch.com (or by calling the church office) if you have any questions on giving, or other ways that you can support the missions and ministry of our Church.

"And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8.



Stain Glass Update

In January we shared a three phase plan to refurbish the 64 stained glass windows that are over 110 years old. Phase one is for the large sanctuary window on Simpson Street, Jesus and the children and its two side windows. The cost is \$126,800. With many generous donations over the past several years, we only have \$26,695 remaining to fully fund and refurbish these windows. Thank you to everyone who has given. If you would like to contribute, envelopes are available in the Main Lobby or Church office.



Penny Bucket

Since 2024 First Church has been collecting change to help provide clean water through the UMC Advance to areas in Africa. Change, and bills, are welcome to continue to care for existing wells and drill new wells for clean water in the Mulungwishi, South Congo area. The Penny Bucket is in the Main Lobby. We thank Barb Strock who as part of the Mission Team will care for this international mission project.



Sticky Bun Sunday | June 7th

Sticky Bun Sunday and Pastor Mira and Grace Farewell – In conjunction with our “One Church Sunday” service on June 7th, we will have an extended coffee and fellowship time after the service. And what goes best with a hot coffee or tea? Sticky buns! If you can help in providing sticky buns, please sign up at the Registration Table in the Main Lobby or on Church Center. This will also be a time for celebrating Pastor Mira and Grace and extending our gratitude for their time here at First Church.



Jubilee Day Parking – June 18th

The youth (and any additional adult support) help to oversee the parking lot on Jubilee Day. Attendees to Jubilee Day can park here, and many offer a donation to our youth summer missions/ service experiences. Come out and support the youth by parking here or sign up on Church Center to help man our parking lot table.



Little Free Pantry

Thanks so much for your support of the Little Free Pantry through your donations and monetary contributions. We are building up our supply to stock the pantry, but we still welcome your donations which can be dropped off at the church office or at the Alley Entrance in the marked basket. We are blessed to be able to offer this 'no barrier access point to food' to our neighbors. Questions? Contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com. Thanks also for your generous peanut butter donations during the Lenten season



Community Dinner | June 7th

Our spring community dinner will be held on Sunday, June 7 at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 132 E. Main Street, Mechanicsburg. This collaborative event with other local churches blesses the downtown community with a meal, music and a gift card drawing, free of charge. The idea comes from the book 'Welcome to Dinner, Church,' which encourages churches to share a meal with their neighbors. We anticipate to serve over 100 of our neighbors and friends at this meal. If you would like to help set up, serve or provide a food item, please contact Lori Hoffnagle at l_hoffnagle@yahoo.com. Thanks for your support!

Ringling in the News!



SAVE THE DATE



The Handbells are hosting a Bon Voyage & Thank You Open House Party!

Date: Saturday, July 25th, time TBD in the M.P.R.

This is NOT a fundraiser, but an opportunity for us to say THANK YOU for your support! Open to all ages-- bagpipes, handbells, sweets and treats, and a showing of the movie Brave!

Stay tuned for more info to come in July!!

Stained Glass Class

THE ANCHOR CROSS

The Anchor Cross stain glass window is located on the first Floor sixth window from the Frederick St entrance.

The Anchor Cross is often called the cross of hope. Hebrews 6: 13-20 reads

*13 When God made a promise to Abraham, because he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply you." 15 And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. 16 Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. 17 In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, 18 so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. 19 **We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.***



The Anchor Cross design goes back to the days of persecution before Constantine. The construction of the anchor allows it to double as a cross, thanks to its crossbar on the top. The cross anchor symbolizes our stability found in Jesus' death on the cross and the resurrection. To non-Christians the symbol appears to be only an anchor, but to Christians it was a symbol of hope. Because the anchor was a common symbol, it was often used in the catacombs to decorate the tombs of the dead.

First Church Mission Moments...



Isaiah 61 Ministries

We have been so blessed by the overwhelming support that FUMC has provided in helping us keep Isaiah 61 going over the past year and half. Your willingness to be the hands and feet of our Lord by helping our less fortunate brothers and sisters in downtown Harrisburg is nothing short of amazing. There are so many ways to help, whether you have 20-30 minutes to help load the van or a couple hours to cook or serve. Please contact Tiffany Holland at 717-961-9644 or check out our Time to Sign Up link in the Service Opportunities email to see all available options.

If you're looking for a reason to join us, here are some from two of our regular volunteers, Frank and Kathy Bobak:

"There are several reasons we have chosen to participate in the Isaiah mission. We believe it is important to give back to our community and support those less fortunate. It has allowed us to not only meet fellow church members but to meet and occasionally get to know some of those we serve. It also leads to a better appreciation of how blessed we all are. A patron once said, "I don't know why you do this; I just wanted to let you know you made my night." That statement told us we do make a difference, and by continuing to volunteer, we are making a difference for someone else."



Operation Wildcat

FUMC will be collecting **Back to School items for Operation Wildcat** during the month of July. All donations must be received at the church no later than Sunday, July 26.

OW's Project Back to School provides students in the Mechanicsburg Area School District with necessary school supplies to ensure they have the essentials needed in their classrooms. Every summer OW collects back to school items. After collection, OW prefills backpacks with these items and delivers the filled backpacks to school counselors to be given out to needy students before school starts. This will help ensure the children of families who cannot afford these items will have a positive start to their school year. Flyers with all the details and a listing of school supplies that are needed will be available soon!

FIRST CHURCH YOUTH

Are you a student between 4th and 12th grade? Check out the format for our Youth Ministry here at First Church and consider plugging in and joining us when you can. We would love to see you at our gatherings. For more information contact Lisa Aronson discipleship@fumchurch.com

4G YOUTH GROUPS | 6:00-8:00 | 6th-12th Grade

1st Sunday: Large group Gathering - starts in the youth lounge or gym and begins with a casual time to hang out, play games, and eat snacks. Afterwards, we dig into God's word and listen to a lesson. Our time of learning is a space to ask questions, have discussions, and support you in your spiritual growth.

3rd Sunday: Large Group Gather and Dinner - similar to the 1st Sunday, with the addition that we will begin our youth group time with a meal in the Fellowship Hall.

STUDENT SMALL GROUPS | 6:00-7:30 | 4th-12th Grade

2nd Sundays: A chance for small group interaction with Students of Similar Ages. This Space is intended to allow for conversation, questions, and age-appropriate faith topics.

Grades 4th - Grade 7th - Meets at First Church in the gym

Grades 8th-12th - Meets at First Church in the youth lounge

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES | 6:00-8:00 | 6th -12th Grade

4th Sunday: Events will vary and may be at First Church or offsite. Some service opportunities will be open to our younger students (4th & 5th graders), but that will be communicated in the information provided.

SPECIAL EVENTS

See Youth Information Page or the Youth Ministry Event page on Church Center for dates, times, and event information.
*Special events may alter the pattern of Sundays.

What does the 4G mean?

It is our statement of purpose for the youth ministry. While we want Youth Group to be a fun place where you can spend time with your friends, we want to make sure that we GATHER together to GROW as we GAIN from God's Word and learn to GIVE back to God in how we live and treat others. (It is also handy to have a 2-letter way of referencing Youth Group for when a text message only allows a certain number of characters)

Youth Week of Service – June 29 – July 2

Make sure to sign up for any or all of the 4 days we will be serving with Wildheart Ministry of Harrisburg. If we have enough interest, we will provide overnight arrangements. Otherwise, we will be serving from 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Each day costs \$15 and includes a light breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Wildheart Ministries is an instrumental organization advancing revitalization efforts within the Allison Hill neighborhood and we will be assigned various work projects. Sign up on Church Center to join us for a day of serving. We encourage you to invite a friend to sign up to serve with us.

Summer Calendar: Reach out to Lisa Aronson, discipleship@fumchurch.com, for a summer calendar.

Stay Connected: Text [fumyouthministry](tel:717-722-4800) to 717-722-4800 to be added to our text communications. Make sure to save the number as a contact to ensure you don't miss any messages.

Summer Missions: Join us this summer as we care for our neighborhood and stay local and serve the city of Harrisburg. We will be partnering with Wild Hearts "Love the Hill" and lodging here at First Church. We will be serving the week of June 28th- July 3rd.

Save the Date: Volunteer for FUMC VBS from July 13-17, Sn'L "Revive" Camping festival at McBic from July 22- July 25.



Church Center Tip: How do I include a photo in my profile?

Photos are a huge help in identifying people. Connecting a face to a name can be especially helpful when we have a new pastor. You have the option to make a photo visible in the directory for others to see or for only staff access.

To add photos for each person in a household

- Choose "My Profile and Settings" near your name (*If this is not viewable on the desktop version, click the first church logo or the right circle on the menu bar to bring up the profile dashboard*)
 - Choose "My Profile & Household"
 - Click "Edit" in the "Profile Information" section
 - Under the circle at the top should be the clickable phrase "Update Photo" (on the desktop version, there is a clickable pencil image near the circle with your initials/picture)
 - A pop-up will prompt you to take a photo, choose a photo from your library, or remove the photo
 - Click "Update" in the top right corner to save your photo
- *If you have multiple people in your household, there will be circles along the top for each member in the household (on the desktop version, there is a dropdown menu with each member's name), and pictures can be uploaded for each by clicking on the circle/choosing the name and following the same steps*

To add a household photo:

- Choose "My Profile and Settings" near your name
- Choose "Directory Profile"
- Go to the section titled "Household".
- Choose "Edit" where it says "household photo."
- A pop-up will prompt you to take a photo, choose a photo from your library, or remove the photo
- Click "Update" in the top right corner to save your photo

To make your photo viewable:

- Choose "My Profile and Settings" near your name
- Choose "Directory Profile"
- Make sure to click "include profile photo" for each household member you wish to have their photo viewable in the directory
- Household photos are viewable on the directory if one is uploaded; no specific checkbox is required

**Reminder: to view the directory, you must receive permission from the office; this is a security measure and assures the directory is not viewable to the public.*

If you need help taking a photo or uploading a photo, please reach out to the church office. On June 7th, at the Sticky Bun Social, we will have a staff member taking pictures for those who are in need of a picture.

First Church Service Shirts Reminder

As you prepare for summer, do you have a First Church service shirt? Consider ordering one for the service projects you plan to serve during the summer. Sign up on Church Center or email Lisa Aronson at discipleship@fumchurch.com. The First Church Service Shirts are designed to unite and identify us as we serve together in our community. Whether you're volunteering at an outreach event, helping with church ministries, or participating in a mission project, these shirts are a simple and powerful way to represent First Church with love and purpose. Wearing a service shirt not only helps others recognize who we are, but it also shows that we're working together as the hands and feet of Christ.

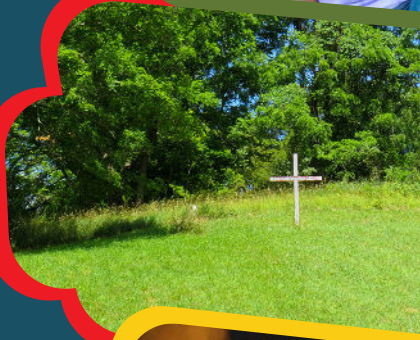
Sunday Morning Coffee

The Coffee Ministry will take a summer pause and will only be offering Coffee on Sunday mornings when there is a combined Sunday school. Coffee will be available on the morning of June 7, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 16, and August 30.



REGISTER FOR SUMMER CAMP!

BUILDING AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS TO
CHRIST, COMMUNITY, AND CREATION.



SPECIAL OFFERS:

Sibling Discount - Register the one at full price, and additional siblings receive a \$25 discount.

Invite-a-Friend Gift - Invite a friend who has never been to camp and receive \$50 off the cost of camp after they register.

Financial Assistance - First Church will pay **half** of your camp fees!



TO LEARN ABOUT:

- Financial assistance for campers
- Details on discounts
- What to expect at camp
- Becoming a prayer partner
- Volunteering as a camp dean, nurse or counselor
- Working at camp
- Campsite workdays

**CONTACT OUR FIRST CHURCH
CAMP COORDINATORS!**



DEB NOSS: SDPPP@MSN.COM
AMY ORTIZ: MATTANDAMYORTIZ@GMAIL.COM

Visit suscrm.org to register and see a complete list of 2026 camps!

Church Staff

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Youth Worship Director:

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Director of Bell Choirs:

Kathie Bittenbender
rbittenben@verizon.net

Organist/Accompanist:

Brandon Rhody

**Director of Little Friends
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director@littlefriendspreschool.org

Timeless Connections:

Patti Vogl
717-319-7318
pvogl@timelessconnections.org

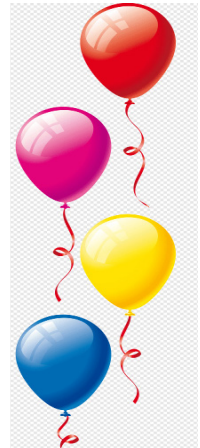


Help us celebrate special birthdays for our church members turning 80 or older!



Dick Scott.....June 2
Marge Scott.....June 5
Barbara Sill.....June 7
Kay Simmons.....June 16
Bonnie Guyer.....June 19

Charlotte Hess.....July 5
Veloice Washburn.....July 6
Mary Beth Snoke.....July 11
George Snoke.....July 16
Frankie Carley.....July 18
Dianne Burgard.....July 20
Harry Woods.....July 27
Jean Adams.....July 28



- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Michael Neidig married 55 years June 4, 1971.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Robert Shannon married 55 years June 6, 1971
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Robert D'Agostino married 57 years June 7, 1969.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Gerry Aumiller married 68 years June 7, 1958.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Jim Chilton married 56 years June 20, 1970.
- ♥ Dr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Fugate married 54 years June 24, 1972.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Larry Buddenbaum married 59 years July 1, 1967.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Gensler married 53 years July 1, 1973.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Simmons married 60 years July 2, 1966.
- ♥ Mr. and Mrs. Gary Klinger married 61 years July 24, 1965.

FIRST NEWS FIRST
EDITORS: Kelsey Goll

The **deadline** for submitting articles
for the AUGUST 2026 issue is **July 15**.
Early submissions always appreciated!